has also been taken to import silk yarn to bring about moderation in silk yarn prices in the country.

(iv) Existing fiscal measures to increase the competitiveness of the handlooms include complete exemption from excise duty of plain reel hank yarn, concession in excise duty on double cross reeled hank yarn for registered hondloom cooperative socities and State level Corporations. Fiscal measures also include complete or partial concession in duties on processing of fabrics made on handlooms. In the new budget, fiscal concessions have been given to facilitate reeling of yarn into hank form outside the mill premises.

Implementation of the project of 'Shilp Gram' by Rajasthan Government

609. SHRI B.L. PANWAR : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to direct the State Government of Rajasthan to implement the project of 'Shilp Gram' at Jodhpur which is pending since long for the upliftment of artisans;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) whether Government propose to provide Central Assistance to complete this project, if so, what will be the amount of such assistance ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT) : (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal to direct the State Government of Rajasthan to implement the project of 'Shilp Gram' at Jodhpur. However, the proposal to set up two Urban Haats for Handicrafts at Jodhpur and Amber received from Rajasthan Small Industries Corporation has been approved.

(b) The main objective of organising these two Haats at Jodhpur and Amber is to provide an opportunity for direct commercial interaction between the buyers and the craftsmen/artisans who are living in remote areas of Rajasthan. These Urban Haats would function for 4 months (from October 15 to February 15) every year.

(c) Yes, Sir. An amount of Rs. 6,97,500 being 75% of the total project cost of Rs. 9.30 lakhs has been sanctioned to Rajasthan Small Industries Corporation for setting up of the two Urban Haats at Jodhpur and Amber.

Insurance of Handloom Weavers in Andhra Pradesh

610. SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether 12,000 handloom weavers in the districts of Prakasam and Guntur in Andhra Pradesh have been covered by insurance as announced by Government as a measure of relief to handloom weavers and

(b) if so, what are the details of the schemes as approved by the L.I.C. ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT) : (a) and (b) A sum of Rs. 7.20 lakhs as Central share was released to Government of Andhra Pradesh to cover 12,000 handloom weavers in Krishna, Prakasam and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh under Group Insurance Scheme. The State Government has reported that they have held discussions with the Life Insurance Corporation, and are in the process of identifying nodal agencies who would collect contributions towards premium from the weavers on a regular basis.

Construction of Houses by Handloom Weavers

611. SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state;

(a) whether there is a scheme for construction of houses by handloom weavers in cooperatives;

(b) if so, the details thereof;